



## **Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission**

**Tuesday, June 24, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.**

### **Air Pollution Control District Boardroom Meeting Minutes**

#### **I. Welcome and Announcements – Katy Schneider, Co-Chair**

The following Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission (hereinafter, “Commission” or “LMTAC”) members were present: Henry Heuser (Co-Chair), Katy Schneider (Co-Chair), Maria Koetter, Amy Johnson, Betsy Ruhe, Todd Eberle, Scott Hannah, Robert Eberenz, Jr., Nelson Maynard, Aaron Boggs, and Kenya Wade, as well as ex-officio Commissioners Mesude Duyar, Mark White, Sherie’ Long, and Michelle King.

Co-Chair Henry Heuser brought the meeting to order.

Henry read a letter from Greg Heitzman to Dr. Stone (Appendix A) offering MSD’s GIS data to the Urban Heat Island study.

#### **II. Approval of Minutes – Henry Heuser, Jr., Co-Chair**

Henry asked for and received unanimous approval of the minutes from last meeting.

#### **III. Old Business**

##### **a. Update from the Office of Sustainability: Maria Koetter, Director of Sustainability**

Maria Kotter, Commissioner (Office of Sustainability), reported that Brian Stone was in town last week. He met with many stakeholders to update everyone on his progress. It’s a 14-16 month process to develop a heat management plan. There are areas on the fringe of the city (GE Plant, Ford, Airport, Mall St. Matthews) that are hotspots. There has been a lot of interest from the press and the community. We should have the findings by this time next year. A representative from the Davey Resource Group will be at the next LMTAC meeting to give us an update on the Tree Canopy Study.

##### **b. LMTAC FY2014 Annual Report – Katy Schneider**

Co-Chair Katy Schneider made a motion to adopt the LMTAC FY2014 Annual Report as was presented at last month's meeting. Commissioner Robert Eberenz, Jr. seconded. All were in favor. See Appendix B for the final version.

### **c. Tree Campaign Update – Claude Stephens**

Commissioner Claude Stephens was not in attendance, so Katy gave the report. The Nature Conservancy is interested in Louisville as a pilot city for their program. It comes with funding and a potential tree campaign. The LMTAC was requested to sign a collaborative letter to The Nature Conservancy to make Louisville a pilot city for the "Healthy Trees, Healthy City" initiative. Katy signed the letter on the Commission's behalf.

## **IV. New Business**

### **a. In-Lieu Fee and the Louisville Tree Fund – Katy Schneider**

Katy gave an update on revisions to the Land Use Development Code. The written comment period ends June 30th. The policy committee drafted a position statement for review and approval by the Commission (Appendix C). These comments relate to the tree canopy requirement portion of the code and the waivers. The letter recommends a fee in-lieu, which would go into the Louisville Tree Fund. Katy said the policy committee felt it would be better if the funds went into a nonprofit rather than a city account.

Robert asked for clarification on the in-lieu fee. Ex-officio Commissioner (APCD) Michelle King said the tree canopy requirement is set. The fee in-lieu gives an alternative way to comply with the canopy requirement. The amount is set using the amount that is paid for the tree, installation and three years of maintenance using competitive rates. Katy clarified that the fee in-lieu can only be spent on trees, tree planting and tree maintenance. Sherie Long, Ex-officio Commissioner (Planning and Design Services) said, currently, when property in Louisville is being developed, the developer can either: (1) save existing trees, (2) plant new trees on-site or (3) plant trees off-site. The suggestion will add a fourth option – the fee in-lieu. You have to exhaust one and two (save or replant on-site) before you can opt for the fee in-lieu. Planting trees off-site would become the last alternative. Henry asked how often this happens. Sherie replied that it happens about 12 times per year. Commissioner Scott Hannah asked if there is a change in the percentages. Katy said they tried to raise them, but the issue has been tabled until the results of the Tree Canopy Assessment are available. An audience member mentioned the airport as an example. They are not allowed to have trees, so an in-lieu fee would work well in this situation.

Katy moved to adopt the revisions to the land development code as presented here. Everyone was in favor.

Sherie encouraged the public to comment on the code. Comments are due June 30th. Commissioner Nelson Maynard asked where to find the revisions online. It's available at <http://www.louisvilleky.gov/PlanningDesign/Land+Development+Code+Improvement+Committee.htm>. Andrea Webster (Project Coordinator, Louisville Metro Office of Sustainability) will post the revisions to the Tree Commission website. Nelson asked how it impacts the Parks Department now. Katy said the canopy is robust in the parks. It would require people to do something close to the development site or in the vicinity. The policy committee would like to see the funds used for areas where the need is greatest. Michelle said the Tree Canopy Assessment results will guide the Urban Forestry Coordinator's decision of where to plant trees. Mesude Duyar, Ex-officio Commissioner (Metro Parks) said it is important to replace trees throughout the city's 110 parks. The tree fund should also be available to Metro Parks.

## **V. Community Projects Updates**

### **a. Dixie Highway Public Improvement Project – Charles Cash**

Charles Cash, architect and planner at Urban 1, gave an update on the Dixie Highway Public Improvement Project. Urban 1 and Concepts 21 are subcontractors to The Corradino Group, which is working on the conversion of Dixie Highway to a boulevard design. Under a separate contract, Muhammad Nouri, PE with Concepts 21, is part of a team that Charles is leading that is working on the design of the first Town Center. Both projects are part of the larger master plan for the Dixie Corridor drafted by the HNTB Corporation and adopted in 2012.

Muhammad spoke about his previous work that led to a Master Plan. Six years ago, the city convened a working group to discuss ideas for Dixie Highway, one of the most dangerous corridors in Louisville. It is unsafe because it has never been planned for pedestrian connectivity. 60,000 cars are using the corridor. Councilman Blackwell convened this group. They developed a master plan for Dixie Highway focused on transportation, land use and urban design. Dixie Highway's intersection with 264 is the only interchange in Louisville without pathways for pedestrians. A center promenade has been designed instead of sidewalks. Medians will be introduced throughout the corridor as a traffic-calming solution. This median will contain opportunities for tree plantings. They expect the ground breaking to be next year. They have \$13,000,000 ready for implementation. The plan includes additional lighting. They have recommended four new town centers.

Charles explained the project area. They held a neighborhood charrette in the neighborhood, and Urban One is almost ready to start the design work. The area has a lot of asphalt that isn't used. Henry asked where the money will come from. Charles said the current funding is only for the design work. The money for the street improvements is there, including the medians. Scott asked how much of Dixie Highway the median project will cover. Muhammad said about three miles for now. The long-term plan is for the median to go from Broadway to the Gene Snyder. Scott asked if they would take away a lane. Muhammad said no. The current lanes are 14 feet wide, so they are taking some space from each to create wider sidewalks in the center. There plans are for a 16 foot wide walkable boulevard down the middle - similar to Eastern Parkway by UofL. Commissioner Betsy Ruhe commented that this project will control traffic by preventing people from being able to turn left wherever they want. An audience member asked if there would be room in the center for rapid transit in the future. Muhammad said no. Bus 18 goes through that area right now. An audience member asked if trees will be planted on either side of the median. Muhammad said yes.

## **VI. Announcements**

Henry said Maria is working with Vanessa Burns to open up the tree wells.

Audience member Jim Schorch from Original Highlands Neighborhood Association said they are trying to do a neighborhood tree assessment. He asked if anyone had been in touch with Patrick Piuma with the Urban Design Studio. Henry said he would give him Patrick's contact info.

Mike Hayman said that Louisville does not have the number of trees in Louisville nurseries to meet the city's tree needs. He's going to work with Urban Forestry Coordinator Erin Thompson to work with local nurseries to increase the number of trees available in the city.

## **VII. Adjourn**

The next meeting is July 22, 2014, at 5:00pm at the Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District Boardroom.

Henry adjourned the meeting at 6:10.